

The Times-Dispatch.

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THE TIMES-DISPATCH, Richmond, Va.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1904.

The Northern Securities Case.

The Staunton Dispatch discusses at some length the decision in the Northern Securities case, concluding by asking what good has been accomplished by the famous victory which the government has won.

"In plain English," asks our contemporary, "whom will it benefit and how?"

"Surely, a decision that was looked forward to with so much eagerness, ought to have results that are instant and large. We are told that the two great systems of roads that had been practically combined were stifling competition, and were not giving the people the various facilities they traverse the advantages in rates and facilities to which they are entitled. The decision was to do away with this state of affairs and to restore to the people the chance to compete, to get better terms, we suppose, over one road or the other, no matter what."

"Now that the plans of these great 'mergers' of property have been defeated, those who won the victory ought to be able to show the results of their victory. If they point simply to the fact that they have given capital a hard knock, we reply: 'If that is all you have done, you have simply used the forms of law to give a blow for anarchy. How much better is this than the course of the French commune. If an attack on property is all you contemplate, whom will it benefit to destroy property?'"

"We ask for compensating benefits to the people in whose name the attack was made. We ask our friends to sit down calmly and figure out, if they can, one single penny that has come or is coming to the people of the great northwest by reason of this victory."

There is much sense in this. So far as the case in point is concerned, and so far as the decision of the court relates to this corporation alone, it cannot be claimed, we think, that any benefit to the railroads involved, or to the country through which they pass, or to the public at large has accrued. The formation of the Northern Securities Company did no harm. In fact, its formation was the only way out of a tangled situation in which a number of large railroad corporations had become involved. There was a fight, as we have already explained, between the owners of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern roads on the one hand and the owners of the Union Pacific on the other, the result of which was a Wall Street panic. After the panic the men interested came together and agreed to "pool their interests." They proposed to make peace instead of continuing a disastrous war. They agreed to put all their holdings together and the only practicable means of doing this was to organize a securities holding company.

The formation of this company was almost a stroke of genius. It greatly relieved the financial situation at that time, and removed a menace to prosperity. The railroads involved have gone on as usual, have greatly increased their earnings, have given their patrons a good service at a fair rate, and so far as we have heard, there has been no complaint whatever against them. In other words, if the patrons of these roads had not known of the formation of the Northern Securities Company they would not have known from the operation of the roads that there had been any change in their ownership.

But there is another side to the question. In a broader sense, the decision has done good. First and foremost, it has brought to the attention of the public a law which has for years and which is to-day a menace to the great corporate interests of the United States, for it is our deliberate opinion that if this law should be strictly and rigidly enforced, it would dissolve many of the large corporations of the country, and put them out of business. Therefore, one or the other of two things must happen: Either the law must be amended or the corporations must adjust themselves to it. The law makers and the corporations are now fully warned and put on notice and the probability is that the Supreme Court will not be called upon to decide any more cases like the Northern Securities case. We believe that all such cases will be settled out of court.

Another good result, which has been accomplished, is that ambitious men are warned that they must not go too far in organizing and operating corporations. Every man of sense concedes that corporations are necessary in this age, and that they should be encouraged and protected by law. But they must also be restrained by law. They must be kept within bounds; there are limits beyond which they must not be permitted to go. The court has warned them that they may be restrained by law, and that they cannot dodge behind the United States government to violate a State statute.

Altogether the decision of the court has accomplished good, and that it has not seriously injured any corporation is

amplified by the fact that the stocks have generally advanced since the decision was announced.

The Cure for Lynching.

The New Orleans Playhouse says that the facts reported from Springfield, O., strengthen the position long held by that paper in such cases, that the only way to put a stop to lynching is to establish public confidence in the criminal courts by a prompt, swift and certain administration of justice. "There is scarcely any case of a capital crime," adds the Playhouse, "in which, no matter what are the proofs of guilt, there is any certainty of punishment, and should it come about that the death penalty is actually visited upon the wretch, the time that elapses between the arrest and the execution is never less than a year, and commonly very much more."

In Virginia we have a law under which persons convicted of criminal assault upon women, or even attempted assault, may be punished with death. When the criminal is apprehended his punishment is sure; yet that fact has not always prevented lynching in Virginia. Recently a negro was arrested for a brutal crime of this character in the city of Roanoke, and when he was caught everybody knew that he would have a swift trial, and that he would be condemned to death. Yet it took a regiment of soldiers to prevent that negro from being lynched. He was tried almost as soon as he was caught. He was condemned to die, and the sentence was executed last Friday within thirty days of conviction. But when there is another such crime, the probability is that efforts will be made to lynch the criminal.

Of course, there is much in what our New Orleans contemporary says. But the fact yet remains that for a certain crime the people in most communities, not only of the South, but of all sections, wish to visit summary punishment upon the criminal without law. The only way to stop lynching is to elevate public sentiment. When men have proper respect for law they will not defiantly and contemptuously trample it under foot, no matter what the provocation.

The Primary Plan.

We do not agree with members who hold that the General Assembly should provide for the election of the various political parties to adopt primary plans. Nor do we understand how those congressmen who, like the editor of the News, desire that the legalized plan shall retain the viva voce system of voting can get over the provision of the Constitution that all elections by the people shall be by ballot—New York Landmark. That provision of the Virginia Constitution which prescribes that "all elections by the people shall be by ballot," has no more to do with the primary methods of political parties in nominating candidates for office than it has with the methods employed by the Ancient Order of Free and Accepted Masons to elect its officers. A primary election by the Democratic party to decide upon its candidates for public office is in no sense an "election by the people," within contemplation of the Constitution. "Elections by the people," as used in the Constitution, refers to elections under the auspices of the State, in which all qualified voters may participate, and not to the nominating primaries of any particular political party from which the voters of all other political parties are expressly excluded. When a candidate is nominated by a Democratic primary election, he is not yet "elected by the people," but simply put forward by a party organization as its candidate to be voted for at "an election by the people."—Lynchburg News.

The News is probably right, yet there are many who think as the Landmark thinks, that any election held under the provisions of a legislative enactment becomes an "election by the people," and must conform in all its details to the Constitution. When Senator Camm Patterson first draughted his bill requiring United States senators to be nominated by primary election he provided for viva voce voting, but afterwards changed the bill so as to provide for voting by ballot, on the ground, as it was reported to us, that the Constitution required all elections by the people to be by ballot.

In such doubt the question ought to be settled by the Court of Appeals. Hence we renew our suggestion that a case be made up, and that the existing law legalizing primaries shall be tested in all its parts. We should have somewhere a primary election by viva voce, we should call upon the county and city in which the election is held to pay the expenses and a case should then be made up and taken by proper processes to the Court of Appeals for final decision. The whole question is now "up in the air," as the saying goes, and nobody knows for a certainty what the status is.

Municipal Railways.

Some interesting comparisons have recently been made between the street railways of Liverpool and those of Chicago. Liverpool has a population of 710,000; it occupies about twenty-eight square miles and has sixty-six miles of tramways, with a total of 101 miles of track.

In Liverpool the fares are charged by stages of about two miles at a penny or two cents per stage. The longest route from the terminus at Seaford, four miles northeast from the center of the city, to Garston, five and one-half miles southwest from the center, consists of five stages, and the fare is five pennies, or ten cents.

It is said that nearly 90 per cent. of the street car travel in Liverpool is confined to the congested area of about eight square miles. In the whole of this territory the density averages over one hundred persons per acre, the highest in England.

The writer goes on to say that the small pay-rolls and short wages account for the alleged profits on the operation of Liverpool street cars, as the following comparative figures show:

Chgo vs Lpvrpool
City Municipal
Railway, Ownership,
1902
1903
Total pay-rolls \$2,475,170 \$720,200
Number of employees 2,957 2,391
Wages of employees, \$28.55 \$318.48

It will be perceived, he adds, that the rate of pay in Chicago is more than two and a

half times higher than in Liverpool, and, as the same differences exist in the wages of all classes who patronize street cars, the one penny rate per two miles paid at Liverpool is equivalent to a five cents fare in Chicago. It is further observed that as there are no transfers in Liverpool, if the two mile stages were adopted in Chicago, it would cost, relatively as much as fifty cents to make a full transfer trip on some of the Chicago routes.

But the interesting part of it all, from an outside point of view, is the fact that the street cars in Liverpool are owned and operated by the city government, and the figures above cited are a valuable object lesson to wage earners, who seem to think that under government operation and control the condition of the workingman would be vastly improved.

Go Easy.

It seems to us that our esteemed neighbor, the News Leader, is giving itself unnecessary trouble concerning Judge Mann's candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Governor. Judge Mann is a member of the Democratic party in good standing. His views on the liquor question are well known, but he was elected in spite of them to be a member of the State Senate, and was elected in spite of the fact that he is author of the Mann law to regulate liquor traffic. That law is, by the way, a Democratic measure, and has stood the test of more than one campaign. Judge Mann may believe in prohibition, but he is, we insist, none the less a Democrat in good standing, and as much entitled as any other Democrat to seek party honors. If he is kindly received into the contest we doubt if his candidacy will make anything like as much trouble for the party as the News Leader seems to fear. But if notice be served upon him that he is not welcome, and especially if an effort be made to exclude him from the party contest, because of his temperance views, the cry of persecution will be raised and the Democratic party will catch it good and hard. It is better for the party to have the friendship and co-operation of the temperance people than to have their enmity and opposition.

The Educational Conference.

At the educational conference to be held in the Senate chamber next week, several distinguished educators will address the public meeting Tuesday night. Among these will be Dr. Charles D. McEwen, of North Carolina, one of the most eloquent and most entertaining speakers of the South; Dr. Kent, of the University; Captain Yawter, of the Miller Manual; and Dr. Mitchell. Those who attend will be instructed and edified.

The Budget Adopted.

The Common-Council last night adopted the budget as it came from the Board of Aldermen. This is a victory for conservatism, economy and good government. We congratulate the members, one and all, upon their wise action, and assure them that they will be sustained by the taxpayers.

Senator Platt, of Connecticut, says the Panama Canal Commission has the greatest work of all the ages to do.

It looks so, and the greater the pity, therefore, that more young or youthful men were not put upon it. As it is, if all the members survive the fever of the isthmus, they will be an aged aggregation before their terms are ended or the canal is finished. It is proposed, we believe, that a majority of the commissioners always shall be present on the isthmus, but we dare say they will meet in Washington from time to time, and may be, will take trips to Europe and to the suex Canal.

It seems that civil service reform is not to cut much figure in the appointments by the Panama Commission.

One of the best indications of the State business is the report of the bank clearings. For some time past the bank clearings in the city of New York have been showing a decrease as compared with those of the year before. In New England there has also been a decrease, and in the Western States some sections have shown decreases and others a slight increase. But there has been but one report from the South and that is a continuous increase from week to week and from month to month as compared with last year.

The high price of cotton has had much to do with this. The South is in a most prosperous condition and necessarily its business is larger. The gain is manifested in the increased bank clearings.

United States senators would better mind lest in introducing Jai Alai into this country—as evidence, even—they undermine the popularity of some of our national games. It is a Cuban "sport," made more or less famous by the license that General Leonard Wood gave it in Havana, where a spacious building has been erected, in which it may be played before large assemblages of betters. Practically speaking, it is alleged that it is a big betting game, and that Wood knew it was when he consented to allow it to go on. Too close an intimacy between Wood and the Jai Alai Company is intimated, also. The game, or sport,

BELFAST BRAND
"Morgan"
25¢ EACH
Royal
"MARINE"
15¢ EACH
ASK YOUR DEALER

THE
EASTER EDITION
OF THE
TIMES-DISPATCH

will be issued to-morrow, and will be one of the most attractive ever printed in the South. Every department will be up to the highest standard and there will be special features that will interest every class of readers.

Special Easter Features

An Easter parade at Atlantic City, in four colors, will make one of the most attractive color pages ever seen here. Illustrated articles on church decorations at Easter and how to plan for a children's Easter Monday party; ancient customs of Easter; programmes of music to be sung in the leading Richmond churches and other local articles will be appropriate to the day.

Manchuria As A Background.

Fine article by Thomas G. Clayton, with a striking illustration that will interest every American.

Editorials By Laity.

Timely topics discussed by Jerome K. Jerome, Lady Henry Somerset, Professor Frederiksen, Delia Austrian, Walter Wood and others.

Harrison On Strikes.

Chicago's distinguished Mayor in an interview with Frank G. Carpenter, the Times-Dispatch special correspondent, discusses labor troubles and other matters in the great western city.

For The Women.

The Woman's Page will abound in Easter ideas and the latest notes on fashions. It will be found especially entertaining.

Many Other Good Things.

Every page of the great Easter edition will be interesting. The comic pages, the Idler's letter, the cartoons, the Virginia features, the society pages, the reviews of the latest books, the Confederate column, the superb children's pages, the genealogical department, and every other field will be found even more entertaining than usual.

ALL THE NEWS
OF
ALL THE WORLD

is said to be irresistibly fascinating, and it is believed it will find great favor in this country.

Baltimore is interested in the proposal to erect a fort at Cape Henry to command the entrance to Hampton Roads. The channel leading between the capes into Hampton Roads is but five miles from Cape Henry, so that modern artillery at the capes would effectually protect the entrance. The Baltimore Sun in speaking of the proposal says that Fort Monroe is not to be despised, but that the audacity of the Japs in entering the approaches to Port Arthur is suggestive and that there should be an additional fort at Cape Henry to protect Baltimore and Washington from invasion.

One of the boodlers who are now under arrest in Chicago cheerfully admits that he has bribed as many as 300 jurors. He had only three men to refuse him; he regarded them as unmitigated cranks, we suppose. It was not in his blood, or brains, to understand what an honest man is.

Admiral Schley is a happy-minded man. He has no presidential aspirations, and what is more he holds the opinion that the sea-faring man does not possess the best qualifications for the office. Hobson probably holds quite a different opinion.

The Queen of England has won great glory by eating a nine-cent dinner. From the "mirration" made on this account, we suspect that she is not in the habit of patronizing ten-cent lunch counters.

A Philadelphia doctor has been telling the public that the form of a woman is not as pretty as the form of a man. He ought not to judge all women by those of Philadelphia.

As Washington is to have a base-ball team this season, we all know in advance which team will not get the pennant.

The Newport News Times-Herald is disgusted with Hobson because he bathes in pink tights. But what better use could he make of them?

A HOT CAMPAIGN
—COMES TO AN END

Arkansas Stirred by Great Political Fight—Primaries To-day.

(By Associated Press.)
LITTLE ROCK, ARK., March 25.—The most strenuous and exciting campaign Arkansas has ever experienced closed to-night, and to-morrow each of the seventy-five counties in the State will hold Democratic primaries. Candidates for the State offices will be voted upon and Democratic nominees for Congress will be chosen in each of the seven districts. Interest centers in the race for the nomination for Governor between Jeff Davis, who retired to a third term, and Hon. Carroll D. Wood, who is at present an associate justice of the Supreme Court.

The result of the primary election on State candidates will be officially declared by the Democratic State Convention, which meets in Hot Springs on the second Tuesday in June.

Governor Davis, in addition to asking the nomination for a third term, is an avowed candidate for United States senator to succeed Senator James H. Berry, whose term expires March 4, 1907.

LEE CAMP MEETING.

Body Decides to Have Commander Smith's Speech Printed.

R. E. Lee Camp, No. 1, held their regular meeting last night. Commander James P. Smith, delivered before the camp that the reunion at Nashville, Tenn., would be held on June 14th, 18th and 19th, 1904, and urged the members to attend. The camp endorsed the Home for Needy Confederate Women and recommended Mrs. N. V. Randolph and Mrs. B. A. Blenner, of Lee Camp's Auxiliary, as members of its board of directors.

The camp fixed Friday, April 8th, as the date for presentation of the portrait of General Wade Hampton, and Friday, 29th, as the time for presentation of the oil portrait of General D. A. Welsiger. Commander Thomas P. Pollard was appointed a committee of one to have printed the speech of Commander James P. Smith delivered before the camp on March 18th, 1904.

Comrade D. C. Richardson presented to the camp a preamble and resolution in reference to James Heers, member of the Letcher Battery, who was killed at Gettysburg, Pa., in 1863, and buried in Hollywood. He was a citizen of Connecticut and served in the Confederate army. The resolutions conveyed to Miss Beers, his only daughter, who now lives in Connecticut, the high regard of the camp, and invited her to visit Richmond as a guest of the camp.

General A. L. Phillips was appointed chief marshal for the Oakwood Memorial parade, May 10th, 1904.

The Calvary Conference.

The conference at Calvary Baptist Church, which has been in session with notable success, will close to-morrow, when the subject in the morning will be "Christian Speculation," and at night is "Loving the Lord."

Last night the greatest meeting of the series was held. A small admittance collected. This is more than the church will seat, and over a hundred persons stood through the service. Dr. W. R. L. Smith delivered a fine address on "Music," and the Dalley Quartette rendered a sacred concert well enjoyed. To-night the Rev. George H. Wiley, of the Methodist Mission, will speak on "The Church and the Masses." The quartette will sing again.

Pleasant Silver Tea.

The silver tea given last night at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Landers, of the North Seventh Street Baptist Church, was a complete success and most enjoyable. The affair was well planned and executed. There was a delightful programme of music and recitations. Among those who sang were Misses Williams, Martenstein and Dalley, the last named a member of the Dalley Quartette. There were several elegantly served refreshments by Miss Steinbrecker and Garbee and Mr. Schaff. Refreshments were served.

Marriage in Fulton.

Mrs. Ellen Bowler and Mr. Edward Bentley were quietly married Wednesday night at 7:15 o'clock at the home of the bride, No. 10 Orleans Street, Fulton. The Rev. James B. Cook, pastor of Hope Memorial Church, an elegant reception was given after the wedding.

Mr. and Mrs. Bentley will reside at the home of the bride, No. 10 Orleans Street, Fulton.

At Leigh Street.

A large congregation was present at the revival at the Leigh Street Baptist Church last night, and considerable interest was manifested in the service.

Dr. Howard Lee Jones, of New York, is preaching with fine effect. There will be no service to-night, but the meetings will continue through next week.

Junior Howitzers.

The Junior Howitzers met yesterday and spent a very delightful evening at the residence of Lieutenant James Burke, No. 21 North Tenth Street. After the business meeting a banquet was tendered by the host of the evening. The singing of "Vaijous" and "Lee MacFarland" was much enjoyed.

Mrs. Gill's Excursion.

Mrs. Gill expects to carry a big crowd to Washington on her Easter Monday excursion. She will have nearly three days to spend in the national capital. The excursion leaves here Easter Monday morning, and returning leaves Washington Wednesday night.

GIVES HIS
PERSONAL WORD

L. P. Richardson, well known news-dealer of 2083 Washington Street, Roxbury, Mass., recovering from effects of several severe colds, writes that his return to health and strength is due to Father John's Medicine, which saved him from pneumonia. He strongly recommends this old-fashioned remedy to any suffering from throat and lung troubles.

MR. MCCARTHY'S STORY.

Mr. John McCarthy, of 54 Hudson Street, Boston, says: "I have tried many others, but Father John's Medicine is the only one that helped me. The money is refunded for any cough, cold, throat or lung trouble it cannot cure. Remember, not a patent medicine, and free from poisonous drugs."

HAS FOR 50 YEARS.

One person in every fifty has consumption. Father John's Medicine cures it—has for fifty years. No poisonous drugs.

The money is refunded for any cough or cold Father John's Medicine cannot cure. Father John's Medicine is for sale by Owens and Minor Drug Company, 107 E. Main St.; City Drug Store, 144 Williamsburg Ave.; Northside Pharmacy, 902 N. Fifth St.; Pine Street Pharmacy, 824 N. Pine St.; East Pharmacy, 2001 Venable St.

It is the
Surer Way

Have your cake, muffins, and tea biscuit home-made. They will be fresher, cleaner, more tasty and wholesome.

Royal Baking Powder helps the housewife to produce at home, quickly and economically, fine and tasty cake, the raised hot-biscuit, puddings, the frosted layer-cake, crisp cookies, puddings, crullers, crusts and muffins, with which the ready-made food found at the bake-shop or grocery does not compare.

Royal is the greatest of bake-day helps.

ROYAL BAKING POWDER CO., NEW YORK.

YERMAK---GREATEST
OF RUSSIAN HEROES

Where you will find the cabins of Russian peasants and you will find on the walls pictures of one Yermak, a Cossack, who, after the lapse of more than 300 years, still holds rank as the greatest of popular heroes. Still to-day there circulate by word of mouth over the steppes of Siberia countless songs and legends which celebrate the prowess of this famous old warrior.

The story of Yermak and what he did for the empire throws light on the great contest which is raging on the far Eastern coast of the Pacific.

The struggle between the Russians and the Mongols is older than the discovery of America by 300 years. In the thirteenth century Tartar Khan, overran Southern Russia with his hordes of Mongols and captured and burned Moscow and other Russian cities. Still in the minds of the Russian people burn memories of the awful scenes of slaughter and rapine which followed.

Again in 1582 the Tartars captured and burned Moscow, and for a hundred years thereafter the Russians paid an annual tribute in money to the Tartar Khan. During this period the Princes of Poland and Lithuania formed an alliance with the Tartars and helped them to conquer the steppes of the Urals of Moscow. This and other similar facts in Russian history help to explain the later policy of Russia in dealing with Poland.

In 1582 Yermak came upon the scene. He was a Cossack of the Ural Mountains, a member of the rich Russian trading family of Strongonoff. Just on the other side of the Ural Mountains lived a lot of nomadic, savage tribes, who were continually making predatory expeditions over the mountains and raiding the scattered Russian settlements.

The Strongonoffs were fur dealers. They corresponded to the great Northwest company and the other similar organizations of fur dealers whose agents did most of the pioneering in the far west of North America. The Strongonoffs were tired of having their trading posts raided by the savages and they commissioned Yermak to cross the mountains and chastise them. And Yermak knew his business. He organized a company of 800 men. They were picked for their qualities as fighting men. Yermak's chief lieutenant was an outlaw under sentence of death. All his men were hardy and adventuresome. Just such an army as might have been made up of the army orders and hunters of 100 years ago in the far western part of this continent. Yermak was furnished with firearms, which was his greatest advantage.

Yermak crossed the low Ural mountains and then embarked his whole party with great stores of provisions, a fleet of great sailing boats, and a flotilla of small boats, and by dint of incredible labor, poled these boats for miles up the Chusovaya River and its tributaries. Then they dragged the boats across narrow portage and started to descend the Tura River.

At a narrow place in the Tura the Tartar chief, Kutchum, prepared an ambush for the party of invaders. Kutchum stretched chains across the stream and posted his forces on the banks and bows side, armed with great bows and arrows. But the crafty Cossack, Yermak, was fully equal to the situation. He made bundles of sticks, wrapped them in the garments of his men, and filled his boats with these dummies. He then sent the dummies, by daring and heroic pilots, to go on down the river and face the ambushed forces. Meanwhile, with almost his complete force of 800 men, armed with muskets, he crept down the river, and when he was within bowshot of the Tartar forces, he fired down the river and the Tartars fled in confusion.

Kutchum, the Tartar chief, was completely deceived by this stratagem. While he was attacking the empty boats Yermak fell upon him and his men behind and sent them flying in confusion to the Tura River.

If you will look on the map you will see a city named Tobolsk. Twelve miles from its present location there stood in the days of Yermak a little town of its own called Sibir—historic name, for from it has been derived the title of all the vast Russian empire in Asia.

To the city of Sibir the dauntless Yermak made a dash. A small detachment of his army, numbering thirty times his own little band, was waiting to meet him. But the Tartars, brave though they were, could not stand before men who had the power of sending thunderbolts against their enemies, and the lightning of the Cossacks were responsible for an overwhelming victory.

By this time Yermak was fifty days' journey away from his source of supplies, and the farther he came on, the more difficult it would be to retreat and retreat would be impossible. Yermak's men naturally wanted to go back to safety while they could, but their dauntless leader would not listen to them. He pointed out that they could not hope to get back home before winter set in, and that, if they tried it, they would certainly be cut to pieces by the Tartars and hordes. He insisted that they go on and capture the city of Sibir.

Meanwhile the Russian Czar, Ivan IV., with the fear of the Tartars in his heart, had heard with indignation that Yermak had gone to invade their country. He feared that in revenge the Tartar tribes

would again march into Russia and perhaps capture and destroy Moscow for the third time. He sent word to the Strongonoff family, expressing his great displeasure and ordering them to recall Yermak and his Cossacks from their dangerous errand. But, luckily for the future of his empire, the Czar's message came too late. Already Yermak was in the heart of the enemy's country, and there was no possible way of reaching him.

In the history of other countries there are instances where bold adventurers have won great victories in the face of the fears of their rightful rulers.

Before the little army of Yermak lay the town of Sibir, and all about it the great Tartar, Kutchum, had built rough fortifications. Behind these walls and bristling battlements the Tartars lay in overwhelming numbers. Yermak led his little force boldly forward to the attack. Out from their abatts the Tartars rushed to meet the Cossacks in such immense numbers that presently Yermak's men were entirely surrounded by the horde and it appeared that this was to be their last battle. But that god which watches over the fortunes of the brave sent a single bullet which took the life of the greatest of the Tartar chieftains, Kutchum himself, and his followers, seeing their leader fall, fled in terror. Superstition won where valor was ineffectual.

On the 28th of October, 1582, Yermak marched into the Tartar city of Sibir and took possession of it in the name of the Czar. The Russian empire in Asia had found a beginning and a name.

Yermak and his band now greatly reduced in numbers, settled down to spend the winter in Sibir. They found there great stores of furs and silks and gold, but no food, and their provisions were exhausted. But the defeat of Kutchum had lost him the allegiance of several of the other wandering tribes, who now came to make friends with the Cossacks and brought with them most welcome offerings of food.

The Cossacks, too, who were hunters as well as soldiers, formed parties and scoured the surrounding region for food supplies. But all the time the hordes of Kutchum lingered about. One band of twenty Cossacks was massacred to a man and several times Yermak was forced to rally his men from the town and fight pitched battles with the enemy. Finally, in one of his forays, he captured Mahkmeikul, the chief warrior of the Tartars. That, for the time, broke their power completely, and Yermak was left complete master of the situation.

Now Yermak commissioned his chief lieutenant, Koltas, to carry out a letter of congratulations back to the Strongonoffs, his employers. Koltas also bore a letter to Ivan the Terrible, the great white Czar, under whose death sentence he was living. In this letter Yermak told the emperor that he laid at his feet the whole land of Sibir as an offering and begged in return that he would be graciously pleased to grant pardons for the past misconduct of his followers. Including, first of all, the man who bore the message.

This message quickly allayed the previously expressed wrath of Ivan, to whom was delivered at the same time the capturing of Tura, the outbreak of the river, and presents of rich furs and gold. From that day Yermak has been exalted to the position of a great national hero. To-day the visitor to Tobolsk, the nearest city to the site of the ancient Sibir, may see his monument, appropriately standing in the center of the city's square.